

Critical Areas—Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas

DR005e



What are fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas?

Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (HCAs) are areas that have been identified as critically important to maintaining specific types of fish, wildlife, and plant species in Redmond.

The City of Redmond's Critical Areas Ordinance (Redmond Zoning Code Chapter 21.64, <u>Critical Areas</u>) regulates HCAs in order to:

- Maintain fish and wildlife populations through protection and conservation of the natural distribution, connectivity, and quality of valuable habitat;
- Prevent isolation, fragmentation, and/or degradation of habitat and species populations;
- Protect river and stream shorelines and their associated riparian areas; and
- Preserve the ecological processes that sustain habitat resources.

Determining If a Property Contains an HCA

Planning and Community Development can always help determine whether a property is located in proximity to an HCA. The online HCA map (accessible from the Standard Maps section of the City website) can quickly identify where known core preservation areas of HCAs are located. Generally, the following would suggest that an HCA is present:

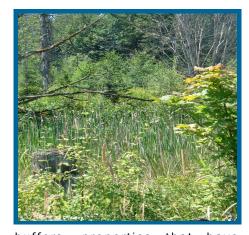
- Rivers and streams;
- Naturally occurring ponds under 20

acres;

- Naturally occurring lakes over 20 acres and other waters of the state, including and waters stocked with game fish by any local, state, tribal, or federal agency;
- Areas of primary association with species of concern. These species are generally sensitive, threatened, or endangered and are listed as protected species by federal or state government. Consult the protected species lists by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW);
- Any priority habitats and areas associated with priority species.
 Consult the WDFW's Priority Habitats and Species List;
- The presence of the Great Blue Heron (a species of local importance);
- Areas that contain locally important species, habitats, and habitat corridors that have recreational, cultural, and/or economic value to residents of Redmond; and
- Natural area preserves and natural resource conservation areas.

Core Preservation Areas

These are areas within the City that are already protected. Existing native growth protection easements, categorized streams and Class I stream



buffers, properties that have transferred development rights, and preserved parkland are all examples of core preservation areas.

Protective Buffers

The designation of stream classification and establishment of protective buffers are intended to protect and minimize impacts to stream riparian corridors by providing separation between stream and development activities. Within these buffer areas, most development is not permitted, except as otherwise allowed under the Shoreline Master Program, Redmond Zoning Code, or required as part of mitigation/rehabilitation.

Protective buffers surrounding streams can range from 25 feet to 200 feet in width depending upon the classification type listed in the table on the next page.

The City may require increased stream buffers for project proposals if it is



determined that the standard width of buffers is insufficient to prevent degradation and protect habitat structure and functions. Other instances where stream buffers may be increased is when a project proposal is located in frequently flooded areas or erosion/landslide hazard areas.

Buffer averaging is often important for project proposals because many buffers can have odd, jagged shapes that can make site planning difficult. An applicant may request buffer averaging if the width reductions will not inhibit and degrade stream and habitat

functions and the following code requirements are met:

- 1. The project proposal must provide additional habitat protection;
- Total area of the stream buffer may not be less through buffer averaging than the standard buffer; and
- 3. Buffer width reduction is not more than 25% of the standard buffer (or 25 feet), whichever is greater.

Review of Projects with HCAs

Any time a project proposal site is located within proximity to an HCA, an applicant must have a Critical Areas Report prepared by a qualified biologist consultant to study the HCA. The purpose of the report is determine the extent, characteristics, and function of any critical areas or habitat that may be affected by activities on site.

Appendix 1 of the Redmond Zoning Code specifically outlines the required details and topics that should be studied in a report. In most cases, management of habitat and wildlife will be necessary, especially in regard to priority species. Washington

Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) provides recommendations for best management practices of species on the WDFW website. Meanwhile, the city maintains specific measures and performance standards for preserving HCAs. For further information regarding performance standards, Redmond Zoning Code Section 21.64.020, Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas.

Please note that review of the Critical Areas Report takes place during the regular permit review process of an environmental/land use application, not separately.

For more information on preservation of HCAs or how you may be affected by the CAO, please contact Planning and Community Development via e-mail at PlannerOnCall@redmond.gov or phone at 425-556-2494.

Classified Streams and Associated Buffers Riparian Stream Corridor Classification Stream Buffer Width

Class I Sar

Sammamish River north of PSE

150' inner buffer + 50' outer buffer

powerline crossing
Sammamish River south of PSE

150'

powerline crossing

130

Bear Creek west of Avondale Road

150'

Bear Creek east of Avondale Road

150' inner buffer + 50' outer buffer

Evans Creek

150' inner buffer + 50' outer buffer

Class II

100' inner buffer + 50' outer buffer

Class III

100'

Class IV

Perennial 36'

Intermittent 25'

Applicable Code Sections

RZC 21.64.020: Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas

Appendix 1: Critical Areas Reporting Requirements

Questions: 425-556-2494 or planneroncall@redmond.gov.

You can also visit us in person at the Development Services Center located on the 2nd floor of City Hall. Open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm.

Development Services Center 15670 NE 85th St PO BOX 97010 Redmond, WA 98073